

ACTION WHA-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	INL-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00
	DOTE-00	ANHR-00	PERC-00	DS-00	EAP-00	EB-00	EUR-00
	OIGO-00	FAAE-00	VC-00	H-00	SSA-01	TEDE-00	INR-00
	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	M-00	AC-00	NEA-00
	DCP-00	NRC-00	NSAE-00	OES-00	OIC-00	NIMA-00	PA-00
	MCC-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SCT-00	FMPC-00	SP-00
	IRM-00	SSO-00	SS-00	STR-00	ASDS-00	SCRS-00	DSCC-00
	PRM-00	DRL-00	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00	/002W

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P 272058Z JUN 05 ZDK
 FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0665
 INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY LA PAZ PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY
 AMCONSUL SAO PAULO PRIORITY
 DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC PRIORITY
 DEPT OF LABOR WASHDC PRIORITY
 CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
 DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY
 FBI WASHDC PRIORITY
 NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
 USCINCSO MIAMI FL PRIORITY
 USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY
 USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY
 USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA PRIORITY

RELEASED IN PART
 B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 001558

WHA FOR A/S NORIEGA
 NSC FOR TOM SHANNON
 FBI FOR CTD/IRAN-HIZBOLLAH UNIT FOR SSA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/24/2015
 TAGS: PGOV, PHUM, PINR, PREL, PTER, KJUS, AR
 SUBJECT: EX-HEAD OF AMIA TASK FORCE SENTENCED TO FOUR-YEAR
 PRISON TERM

REF: A. BUENOS AIRES 02712
 B. BUENOS AIRES 02540
 C. BUENOS AIRES 1349

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
 REVIEW AUTHORITY: OSCAR J OLSON
 CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL REASON: 25X6
 DECLASSIFY AFTER: 18 JUN 2035
 DATE/CASE ID: 17 NOV 2011 200705645

Classified By: Ambassador Lino Gutierrez for Reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

1. (C) SUMMARY: On June 21, retired police chief Carlos Castaneda, who led the Federal Police team investigating the AMIA bombing from 1994 to 1997, was convicted and sentenced to four years in prison for his part in the loss of evidence relating to the case. If the sentence is confirmed, he will be the first person actually convicted and sent to prison in relation to the 1994 AMIA bombing. Federal judge Juan Jose Galeano, the first judge in charge of the case, is also currently on trial for his handling of the case. He has been suspended and is facing impeachment and possible imprisonment.

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However, recent personnel changes and increased resources provided by the Kirchner Administration to the office now in charge of the investigation, the AMIA Special Prosecutor's Office, offer hope that those responsible for the terrorist attack may one day face justice.

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Post
will continue to monitor the situation END SUMMARY.

2. (U) On June 21, retired police commander Carlos Castaneda became the first person to be convicted and sentenced to prison in relation to the 1994 AMIA terrorist attack (REF A). Castaneda was sentenced to four years in prison, but remains free pending confirmation of his conviction. Following the acquittal of all the defendants that made up the so called "local connection" (REF B), the focus of the investigation turned to those charged with initially investigating the attack. From 1994 until 1997 Castaneda headed the special federal police unit created to investigate the AMIA attack. During his time in charge of this special unit, 66 tapes containing phone conversations of the GOA's main local suspect in the case disappeared. The prosecution argued that the loss of the tapes constituted intentional obstruction of the investigation by Castaneda and that since the AMIA bombing was a terrorist act the obstruction amounted to a crime against humanity. Apparently, the three-judge panel agreed with this argument. Castaneda and a former subordinate were meanwhile cleared on charges of falsifying official documents they submitted

apparently intended to cover up the loss of the missing evidence. For his part, Juan Jose Abila, the lawyer representing the AMIA association, saw the conviction as at least a small step toward ending the "impunity" of the officials he believes intentionally mishandled the case.

3. (U) Meanwhile, Juan Jose Galeano, the initial federal judge assigned to handle the AMIA investigation, is also battling charges of obstructing the investigation. He has been suspended and faces impeachment and possible imprisonment regarding his handling of the case. Recently, his critics have repeated claims of a possible "Syrian connection" to the AMIA case and claim Galeano suppressed evidence relating to a Syrian-born suspect. In late 2003, a federal judge investigating the handling of the case requested tapes of conversations between Syrian born Alberto

Kanoore Edul and other suspects that occurred days before the attack. Galeano was unable to produce the tapes and later admitted that they had been lost. Galeano fired back both in court and in the press against his critics. He insists that while he made mistakes, he always acted in good faith and to the best of his abilities.

4. (C) COMMENT: If the conviction is confirmed, Castaneda will soon become the first, but probably not the last, GOA official to face legal sanctions regarding the poor handling of the AMIA investigation. Galeano could possibly be the next. Many people predicted that when the case against the "local connection" fell apart attention would turn to those responsible for the investigation.

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5. (C) However, the office that is now in charge of the investigation, the AMIA Special Prosecutor's Office, has more resources and a higher level of political backing than the federal judge who is currently on trial for bungling prior investigations. The recent personnel changes and increased resources provided by the Kirchner Administration to the AMIA Special Prosecutor's Office does offer hope that those responsible may one day face justice.

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[REDACTED] Post will continue to monitor
the situation. END COMMENT.

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GUTIERREZ

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